



April 26, 2012

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Theodore L. Voorhees, Deputy City Manager
Through: Rhonda B. Parker, Director of Parks and Recreation
From: Parvin J. Neloms, Jr Assistant Director for Recreation Programs
Subject: Request to appear before Council Work Session 5/10/12-Lisa Richmond

Executive Summary

Lisa Richmond of 216 Walton Street in Durham made an official request to appear before City Councils' Work Session on February 23, 2012. On May 10, 2012 she is scheduled to appear before City Council to:

- Follow up on the earlier Birchwood report/City report
- Request that the City provides (1) staff member to work with community volunteers
- Request that the City continues the agreement with Birchwood Heights Neighborhood Association Board
- Request that City funds be allocated to DPR's budget to support programming at Birchwood Community Center.

Since the Council Work Session February 23, 2012, the coalition team continues to collaborate and work with the Birchwood Heights Neighborhood Association Board (BHNA). All organizations are still in full agreement that a new direction is desirable for this community.

Summary Review of Prior Actions

On Tuesday, January 24, 2012, the Birchwood Heights Neighborhood Association Board met with several exceptional youth organizations. These organizations were provided to help educate the Birchwood community about additional programming resources outside of DPR. Youth organizations were as follows:

- The Q Foundation of Charlotte, NC
- (YES) Youth Education for Savings Consortium, Inc. of Morrisville, NC
- In the Citizens School Program of Charlotte, NC
- Green Light Counseling of Durham and Raleigh, NC
- Durham County Cooperative Extension

As of today, the youth organizations continue to show an interest in working with the Birchwood Heights Neighborhood Association Board on various projects.

Actions on Birchwood since February 23, 2012:

- NIS and Mike Schiflett met with the Birchwood Heights Neighborhood Association Board on Saturday, March 24, 2012. They provided training on HOA administration and management policy procedures.
- Delphine Sellars, Durham County Cooperative Extension met with the board early March of 2012 before their board development training to discuss potential funding sources and additional training.
- Durham County Cooperative Extension agreed to start the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Programs by the first week of May for at least one to two times per week. Carlos Moses, Program Assistant, 4H Youth EFNEP will be coordinating the program with a focus on gardens, computers and youth development.
- Ms. Sellars reported to the BHNA on March 13, 2012 that the garden grant was submitted by DPR and Durham County Cooperative Extension. On April 19, 2012, it was reported that DPR and Durham County Cooperative Extension received funding of \$1,000 to have a community garden at Birchwood Community Center. The funds will be accepted and appropriated for spending at the June 4, 2012 CC Meeting.
- Birchwood has scheduled a community event on Saturday, April 28, 2012 to introduce the community to the idea of the community garden, summer classes, computer classes, food and nutrition classes and more.
- Green Light Counseling "Ace It" Program is continuing to work with the Birchwood Community on Wednesdays at 4:00pm to offer life skill classes.
- Q Foundation's Director, Stephan Askew has confirmed with DPR that his organization is still very interested in working with Birchwood.
- Ms. Joyner, Director of DOVE is scheduled to meet with Lisa Richmond by April 27th to discuss the specifics of their proposed summer program. It is relevant to mention that this organization seeks funding from outside agencies, grants to providing this service.
- DPR Summer camp services will be provided at East Durham Recreation Center again for Birchwood Heights this summer. Transportation will be provided for Birchwood residents who request it.
- DPR has taken the lead on working with Duke and the board regarding the development of the computer lab. The City's TS Department provided two loaner computers with monitors. DPR installed the computers with Microsoft software on Friday, March 23, 2012 as requested by BHNA. BHNA is responsible for computer and software upkeep.

- Lisa Richmond the board's lead contact is responsible for the Duke computer project. She was contacted and informed that BHNA is officially on the list for Duke's surplus computer.
- On April 10, 2012 during a meeting with Mr. Kasib Abdullah, he mentioned that Believers United for Progress (BUFP) is planning to donate 4 computers to Birchwood Community Center.
- The City has been approached by a community member of Birchwood that wants to manage the facility (staffing, utilities, programming) utilizing their own funding.

Recommendation

DPR staff recommends that the City continue working on a transition plan incorporating various partners on issues in the Birchwood Heights Community and continue working closely with the Birchwood Heights Neighborhood Association Board and other community organizations as part of a team including Durham Parks and Recreation, Neighborhood Improvement Services, and Durham County Cooperative Extension. DPR does not recommend that the City itself provide staff to the facility.